

REMARKS

Claims 1-12 are now active in this application..

REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 112, FIRST PARAGRAPH

In the Official Action dated September 23, 2002, claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such as way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

The rejection is respectfully traversed.

According to Fig. 1, digital manipulation apparatus 320 may be the same type of apparatus as digital multifunctional apparatus 120 (see Fig. 1 and page 3 of the specification), and panel control means 325a is the same type of means as panel control means 125a.

Furthermore, an example of registering a digital multifunctional apparatus 320 with a group is described beginning at line 11 of page 16 and continues through page 17. In accordance with this description, control panel 325 (input manipulation means) is part of the digital multifunctional apparatus 320 (provided in each image communication apparatus). When "Register with destination group" is displayed on the panel control 325b and is selected, the panel control means 325a in the digital multifunctional apparatus 320 directs the image server 110 to send the names of the destination groups (all the destination group names sent back from the image server). The panel control means 325a then displays on the panel control 325b the dialog box for selection of one of the names of the destination groups received from the image server in which to register digital multifunctional apparatus 320. When one of the names of the destination groups in which to register digital multifunctional apparatus 320 is selected using the dialog box displayed on the panel control 325b (can specify one of all the destination group names sent back from the image

server), panel control means 325a sends to the image server 110 the names described on page 17, lines 14-16, together with a request for registration with the group (request the image server to make a registration with a group).

In accordance with this description, there is described input manipulation means (325a, 325b), provided in each image communication apparatus (320), which can request (via 325b) the image server (110) to make a registration with a group and can specify one of all the destination group names sent back from the image server. The destination group is specified using the dialog box displayed on the panel control 325b, which is part of the input manipulation means, which is also part of the digital multifunction apparatus 320.

The written description requirement is different from the enablement requirement of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112. See *In re Barker*, 559 F.2d 588, 194 USPQ 470 (CCPA 1977). The function of the written description requirement is to ensure that the inventor had possession, as of the filing date of the application here relied on, of the specific subject matter later claimed by him. See *In re Edwards*, 568 F.2d 1349, 196 USPQ 465 (CCPA 1978). The question is not merely one of literal support for the questioned claim language in the original disclosure, it is one of the disclosure of concepts. See *In re Wilder*, 736 F.2d 1516, 222 USPQ 369 (Fed. Cir. 1984) and *In re Kaslow*, 707 F.2d 1366, 2177 USPQ 1089 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

The test for determining compliance with the written description requirement of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. § 112 is whether the disclosure of the present application as originally filed reasonably conveys to the artisan that the inventor had possession, at the time of filing of the application, of the later claimed subject matter, rather than the presence or absence of literal support in the specification for the claim language. Note, for example, *In re Kaslow*, 707 F.2d 1366, 217 USPQ 1089 (Fed. Cir. 1983).

In view of the discussion above, the specification clearly contains an adequate written description of the limitation(s) recited in claim 1, and in particular, the limitations designated by the Examiner as 1) and 2) in the Official Action of September 23, 2002. Consequently, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully solicited.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

In the Official Action date September 23, 2002, claims 1-12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hosotsubo (U.S. Patent No. 6,009,485) and Tabata (U.S. Patent No. 6,198,542 B1), for the reasons substantially of record.

The claimed invention is on a system wherein a local side apparatus can "register the local side apparatus with a group" which is stored in the storage means of the image server.

Generally, in a network wherein a new device is introduced to a local side, a server side receives the information about the introduction of the new device and then must register the device with a group. It is a very troublesome operation.

In order that the local side device executes the registration operation, the local side device must have rights not only to access a server, but also to change the accessed content.

However, in case where a plurality of local devices are connected via a network like the embodiments of the present invention, if each local device is able to change the database freely, it creates difficulty.

In other words, this means that a local device can register another local device with a group or change the group of the other local device, as well as the local device being able to change the group to which the local device belongs. This becomes a factor in producing an error in registration or in the change. Therefore, it is preferable to arrange such network so that the content of the database in the server cannot be changed by the local side (device).

The system in the present invention allows the local device to register in a group to which the local device belongs even under such conditions.

That is to say, claim 1 describes input manipulation means, provided in each image communication apparatus, which can request the image server to make a registration with a group and can specify one of all the destination group names sent back from the image service. Each image communication apparatus is not provided with a function for registering the apparatus itself (image communication apparatus) with the information memorized on a storage memory, but with a function for specifying a group to which the image communication apparatus belongs and for sending the information to the server.

Upon receiving the information, the image server executes registration of the image communication apparatus. Thus, the image server can register only the image communication apparatus that specifies the group, but cannot register another image communications apparatus.

Such configuration makes it possible to include an image communication apparatus that selects a specific group into that selected group, while the registration or change of another image communication apparatus cannot be executed at all.

To expedite prosecution, claim 1 is amended to clarify the respective functions of the input manipulation means: the input manipulations means can (1) issue a request to the image server to send back all the destination groups, (2) select a specific group from among all the destination groups sent back from the image server, and (3) based on the selection, send the image server the selected group together with a request to register its own communication apparatus with the specified group.

Thus, amended claim 1 recites, *inter alia*:

input manipulation means, provided in each image communication apparatus, which can request the image server to send back all the destination groups, and specify a specific group from among all the destination groups sent back from the image server, and send to the image server at least the specified

group together with a group registration request to register the image communication apparatus with the specified group after specifying the group, and distribution managing means, provided on the side of the image server, which sends to the image communication apparatus all the destination groups according to the request sent from the image communication apparatus to send all the destination groups, and after a destination group is specified by the image communication apparatus, registers the image communication apparatus with the specified destination group.

Applicants wish to note that in the present invention, a domain name is used for specifying its own apparatus. Therefore, the specified group may be a domain name of an image communication apparatus.

Claim 12 is similarly amended, and now recites, *inter alia*:

requesting from an image communication apparatus for the image server to send back all the destination groups,

sending all the destination groups from said image server to said image communication apparatus in response to the request from the image communication apparatus for sending all the destination groups,

sending from an input manipulation means provided in the image communication apparatus a request for registration of the image communication apparatus with a destination group, and at least a specified destination group specified by the image communication apparatus, and

registering said image communication apparatus with the specified destination group according to the group registration request and the specified destination group sent from said image communication apparatus.

The Examiner notes that in Hosotsubo, apparatus 22 can request to make a registration with a group. However, as previously noted, apparatus 22 is a host corresponding to the image server 110 of the present application, not to the image communication apparatus 120, 130, 140, 160, 310, etc. In Hosotsubo, printer 1 would correspond to an image communication apparatus of the present application, as understood from the description at column 6, lines 7-26. In Hosotsubo, only host 22 (corresponding to the server in the present application) can register a group. More specifically, every operation for registration is done by host 22, and no commands are issued from a device that corresponds to an image communication apparatus.

In contrast, amended claim 1 clearly delineates there is an input manipulation means, provided in each image communication apparatus, which can request the image server to send back all the destination groups, and specify a specific group from among all the destination groups sent back from the image server, and send to the image server at least the specified group together with a group registration request to register the image communication apparatus with the specified group after specifying the group.

Similarly, amended claim 12 delineates steps of requesting from an image communication apparatus for the image server to send back all the destination groups, and sending from an input manipulation means provided in the image communication apparatus a request for registration of the image communication apparatus with a destination group, and at least a specified destination group specified by the image communication apparatus.

Tabata is not concerned at all with the present application. In Tabata, a group can be listed on a display. However, the displaying can be done on the server side only, and not on the side of the digital integrated apparatus, corresponding to image communication apparatus of the present invention. Thus, even if the teaching of Tabata were combined with the arrangement of Hosotsubo, the claimed invention does not result.

Clearly, amended independent claims 1 and 12, as well as dependent claims 2-11 are patentable over Hosotsubo and Tabata, considered alone or in combination. Consequently, the allowance of claims 1-12, as amended, is respectfully solicited.

CONCLUSION

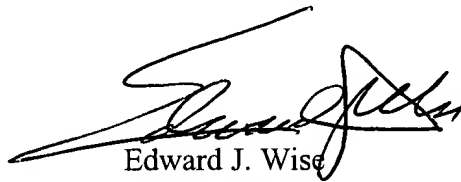
Accordingly, it is urged that the application, as now amended, is in condition for allowance, an indication of which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues

that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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CLAIMS WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

Please amend claims 1 and 12 as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) An image data distribution system wherein an image server has information on destination [group] groups formed of members selected from among a plurality of image communication apparatuses, and the information are memorized on a storage memory, and wherein[,] the image data will be sent out to the respective members of the destination group specified by the destination information, said system comprising:

input manipulation means, provided in each image communication apparatus, which can request the image server [to make a registration with a group and can specify one of all the destination group names] to send back all the destination groups, and specify a specific group from among all the destination groups sent back from the image server, and send to the image server at least the specified group together with a group registration request to register the image communication apparatus with the specified group after specifying the group, and

distribution managing means, provided on the side [or] of the image server, which sends to the image communication apparatus all the [distribution] destination [group names] groups according to the request [for group registration] sent from the image communication apparatus to send all the destination groups, and [which, when] after a [distribution] destination group is specified by the image communication apparatus, registers the image communication apparatus with the specified [distribution] destination group.

12. (Twice Amended) An image data distribution method wherein an image server has information on destination [group] groups formed of members selected from among a plurality of image communication apparatuses, and the information are memorized on a storage memory,

and wherein[,] the image data will be sent out to the respective members of the destination group specified by the destination information, said method comprising:

requesting from an image communication apparatus for the image server to send back all the destination groups,

sending all the destination [group names] groups from said image server to said image communication apparatus in response to the request from the image communication apparatus for sending all the destination groups,

[when] sending from an input manipulation means provided in the image communication apparatus a request for registration of the image communication apparatus with a destination group, [is made from an input manipulation means provided in the image communication apparatus] and at least a specified destination group specified by the image communication apparatus, and

registering said image communication apparatus with [a] the specified [distribution] destination group [when the distribution destination group is specified by] according to the group registration request and the specified destination group sent from said [the] image communication apparatus.